

'Uncle Harry,' in Cinema Form, Is Superbly Acted Thriller

By JAY CARMODY.

Universal Pictures, in the person of Joan Harrison, has taken some fancy liberties with the story of "Uncle Harry" in translating the Thomas Job play to the screen. The changes have weakened the dramatic effectiveness of the old Joseph Schildkraut-Eva Le Gallienne vehicle, but they have by no means destroyed it. That could hardly be done in the face of a series of superb performances by Geraldine Fitzgerald, Ella Raines and George Sanders in Keith's new feature. Under Robert Siodmak's direction they have whipped out a sparkling tale of a strange love that will remain memorable for its acting if for nothing else.

Miss Harrison, who was schooled in the art of producing mysteries by no less a master than Alfred Hitchcock, illustrates again that she is a highly polished artist at this sort of thing. One effect of her mastery of the genre is to sprinkle it with considerably more of humor than the stage play had. If she had not gone in for a trick ending—which the public is asked not to divulge—she would have had a more effective piece of cinema. The trick ending, incidentally, is by no means a fresh device, and seems to be in danger of becoming too popular in Hollywood.

"Uncle Harry" remains essentially the same tale it was on the stage, for all the difference in its telling. Its central figure are the Quinceys, family, once but a faint shadow of its old self. There are three Quinceys, Brother Harry and his two sisters, Lettie and Hester. They are a quite unhappy trio, existing in various stages of moral decay. They are a persecution complex, the mildest mishap to overtake any of the group. Harry is a sort of wan, worn, helpless fellow, trapped by Sister Lettie's deep, strange sense of possessiveness toward him. Lettie is violently neurotic.

Into their nettled lives the plot brings beautiful, naive Deborah Brown, played by Miss Raines, with a somnolent allure that looks like a paraphrase of Laurel Bacall. Miss Raines has the same trick of using her eyes and a voice quiet as a dead ringer for that which gave Lauren her current standing in pictures. We do not think Miss Raines' performance is a deliberate imitation of Miss Bacall's style, even if it were it no doubt will be quite all right with everybody.

Miss Raines' function in the lives of the three Quinceys is to rescue Harry from the evil hold of mad, possessive Lettie. She is a crafty girl in a game like that, but Lettie is even more devil of guile. The obstacles she devises are artful and successful enough to drive the two lovers as crazy as she is, but before that happens murder lifts its ugly face just in the nick of time. It is against the rules to reveal too much of its detail, but it is quite a dramatic murder—that may be spoiled for you by the ending which we mentioned at the beginning.

Boy Meets Girl Via Book

By HAROLD HEFFERNAN. HOLLYWOOD.

Make-believers at work: When screen writers wake up screaming (and they often do) it's invariably to wrestle with the biggest situation problem of all: How to make boy meet girl. They did no insomnia or screaming act in the case of "Leave Her to Heaven," however. The popular novel had a ready-made boy-meets-girl situation packed between the covers of the book—and so unique that writers at 20th Century-Fox never thought of changing it. It's always interesting to watch the boy-meets-girl episodes being shot and we counted ourselves lucky to come upon Gene Tierney and Cornel Wilde finding themselves acquainted on Stage 12, where John Stahl is directing the film version of this psychological murder story. The setting is the club car on a train, with New Mexico scenery flashing past the windows. Miss Tierney, voted last year's best-dressed star by a committee of fashion experts, is wearing a simple but eloquently contoured beige sports dress.

Wilde, who became suddenly prominent after his appearance in "A Song to Remember," is playing the romantic role. With a modern haircut he looks thinner, but handsomely prosperous. He's wearing a well-tailored tweed suit.

And as the scene opens the two are strangers, sitting across the aisle from each other. At first he doesn't see her face, because she's reading a book (and he is the author), but he sees the rest of her, and he's interested. She lowers the book and her head drops sleepily to one side, and he sees her face. This heightens his interest.

Then the book slips from her hands and its falling awakens her. She finds herself staring at a young man who guiltily starts reading a magazine. After a few moments he looks up, discovers that she still is staring at him. Unreasonably, he's a little angry. He meets her glance squarely as if to stare her down.

She smiles. "Oh, I'm sorry," she says. "I was staring at you, wasn't I? I didn't mean to, really. It's

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because I—because you look so much like my father. When he was younger, of course—your age. A most incredible resemblance. Do forgive me."

This is a new one to him, but he decides to return her smile. "Well, to tell you the truth," he says, "I was doing quite a bit of staring myself. And I can assure you it's not because you look like my mother."

"Then why did you stare?" she asks in mock surprise.

Before he answers, he decides to move across the aisle to a seat beside her. And this is the start of one of the most sizzling romances now unfolding in front of the cameras.

Charles Boyer and Lauren Bacall have just ended an impassioned scene in "Confidential Agent" at Warners and Oliver Garretson, unit sound mixer, leans back from his instrument panel and smiles.

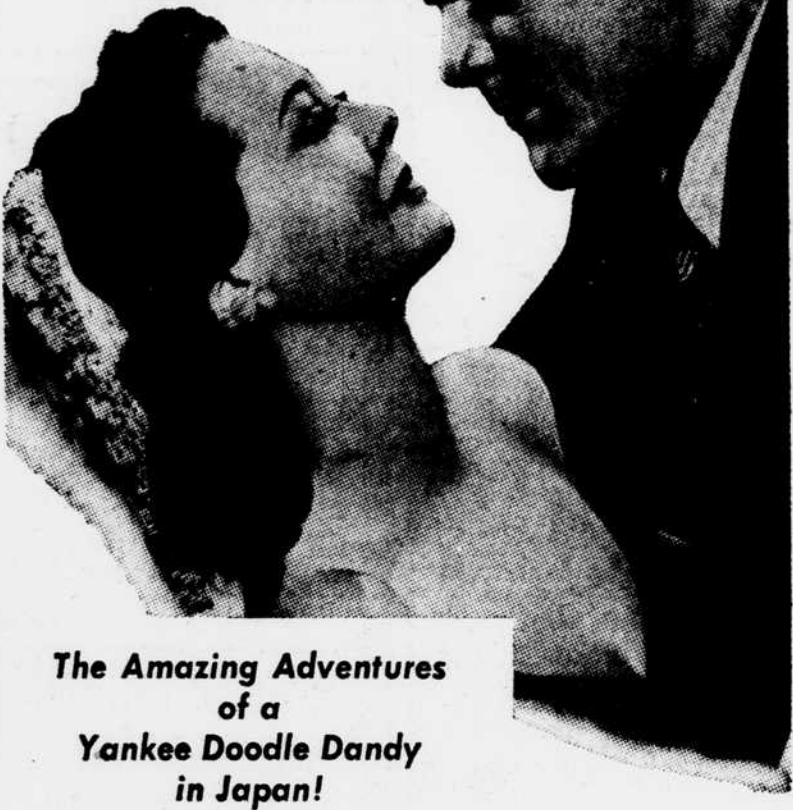
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GREER GARSON and **GREGORY PECK**
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THE FAMOUS BEST-SELLER FLAMES TO LIFE!

Where and When
Current Theater Attractions and Time of Showing

National—"Life With Father": 8:30 p.m.

Screen.

Capitol—"Junior Miss": 11 a.m., 1:45, 4:30, 7:15 and 10 p.m. Stage shows: 1, 2:45, 5:30 and 9:20 p.m.

Columbia—"Valley of Decision": 11:40 a.m., 2:10, 4:35, 7:05 and 9:30 p.m.

Earle—"Christmas in Connecticut": 10:30 a.m., 12:45, 3, 5:10, 7:25 and 9:45 p.m.

Hippodrome—"The Silver Fleet": 2:15, 3:45, 5:10, 6:40, 8:10 and 9:40 p.m.

Keith's—"Uncle Harry": 11:55 a.m., 1:55, 3:55, 5:55, 7:55 and 9:55 p.m.

Little—"On Approval": 11 a.m., 12:45, 2:30, 4:15, 6:7:50 and 9:40 p.m.

Metropolitan—"G.I. Joe": 11 a.m., 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:20 and 9:30 p.m.

Fix—"Escape From Yesterday": 2, 4:40, 7:20 and 10:10 p.m.

Palace—"Blood on the Sun": 11 a.m., 1:10, 3:15, 5:25, 7:30 and 9:40 p.m.

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HOLLYWOOD.
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Assisting her is a Miss Betsy Em-

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mons, who has come to Hollywood from New York City on assignment from the publishers.
The tentative title of the autobiography is "My Young Life."

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